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SUBJECT: SOUTH AFRICA POLITICAL NEWSLETTER DECEMBER 7-DECEMBER 11

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¶1. (SBU) This was written in partnership with the Open Source Center's Pretoria Bureau. The newsletter is open to contributions from officers in the Embassy or in the Consulates who wish to highlight political trends. Contact Madeline Seidenstricker or Jonathan Smallridge for more information, or to make contributions. The newsletter also is available on the Political Section's blog, "A View from South Africa," found on intelink.gov.

International News

Zuma Says Long-Term Financing Package for Adaptation, Mitigation
"Central" to Copenhagen Talks

¶2. (U) On December 9, Johannesburg SABC 3 Television said climate change also dominated President Jacob Zuma's State Visit to Zambia. He will reportedly advocate Africa's position in Copenhagen next week, seek support from peers, and insist on a commitment from global powers. Zuma said the impact of global warming was undermining the continent's developmental agenda. He said, "Our view is that an ambitious and long-term financing package for both adaptation and mitigation is a central element of the Copenhagen negotiations, and one that will have significant impact on the extent to which developing countries can take mitigation action." [English-language television channel, nominally independent but partially funded by government]

Civil Society Groups Laud RSA's Pledge To Reduce Greenhouse Gas Emissions

¶3. (U) On December 9, The Durban Mercury reported the South African Presidency's announcement that the nation would cut emissions below anticipated trends by "around 34 percent by 2020 and by around 42 percent by 2025," although this was "conditional on pledges by developed countries." This is the first time that Africa's largest emitter has put actual emissions-reduction figures on the table, and came ahead of the opening of the two-week UN Framework Convention on Climate Change talks in Copenhagen aimed at getting a legally binding agreement on reducing greenhouse gas emissions. Tasneem Essop, World Wildlife Fund South Africa's climate change policy activist, said this pledge was an "example of emerging economies contributing in a meaningful way to secure a successful outcome in Copenhagen," adding that collective offers by countries like Brazil, India, China, South Korea, Indonesia and South Africa on actions to limit their emissions growth "represent more tons of carbon reductions than what industrialized countries have offered thus far." The report added that meanwhile, developed countries have not yet responded to South Africa's announcement about its intentions to limit growth by 2025. [The Durban Mercury Online in English -- Website of regional KwaZulu-Natal newspaper, privately-owned by Independent Newspaper Company; URL: <http://www.themercury.co.za/>]

Zambia, RSA Sign Six Agreements To Enhance Economic Development

¶4. (U) ZNBC Television reported that Zambia and South Africa signed six Memoranda of Understanding [MoU] on 8 December, which were aimed at enhancing bilateral economic development. These included regular diplomatic consultations, trade and industrial development cooperation, agriculture and livestock, health, energy, and geological, mining, and minerals. Zambian President Rupiah Banda stressed that "these MoUs have a purpose, and those purposes are to be implemented." President Jacob Zuma invited Banda to visit South Africa to "take further" the issues discussed. [Government-controlled national television station]

South Africa Meets with Swiss Government

¶5. (U) Department of International Relations and Cooperation (DIRCO) Deputy Minister Ebrahim Ebrahim co-chaired the Second South Africa-Switzerland Annual consultations with the State Secretary of the Confederation of Switzerland Michael Ambühl in Pretoria on December 7. The consultation took place within the context of the North-South Dialogue and was aimed at deepening bilateral relations between the two countries. The two sides discussed cooperation in science and technology, bilateral development, preparations for the 2010 World Cup. Additionally, the two countries exchanged views on issues related to the entire African continent. (DIRCO Briefing, December 7)

Domestic News

Minister Tackles Home Affairs Corruption

¶6. (U) Home Affairs Minister Nkosazana Dlamini-Zuma has launched a PRETORIA 00002565 002.2 OF 002

series of investigations into fraudulent and corrupt activities in the Department of Home Affairs. Home Affairs will investigate fraudulent registration of births and the illegal issuing of identity documents and passports to foreign nationals. More than 31 Home Affairs officials have been suspended. The suspended officials from Kwazulu-Natal, Mpumalanga, Eastern Cape and Limpopo offices, joined a list of 28 more officials who were fired in November. This brings the total number of suspended officials since November to 59.

Dlamini-Zuma told reporters that corruption in Home Affairs is a serious threat to national security. She noted that it undermines the stability of democracy and costs the state thousands of dollars.

More importantly, fraudulent IDs give criminals the power to apply for South African passports which are then used for criminal activities abroad, she added. (Buanews, December 11, 2009)

By-Elections in KwaZulu-Natal Favor Inkatha Freedom Party and Democratic Alliance

¶7. (U) The Inkatha Freedom Party (IFP) and the Democratic Alliance (DA) won by-elections held in KwaZulu-Natal. The IFP won two wards in Eshowe and Mbabazane, while the DA won one ward in the Hibiscus Coast, Port Shepstone. The elections were well organized and no incidents of violence were reported said the Independent Electoral Commission (IEC) Chief Electoral Officer Mawethu Mosery. Mosery reported that the DA has increased its voter base from 849 votes to 1209 voters since the 2006 local government elections, while the IFP has lost voters from 5 percent in the local government elections to 0.8 percent. The African National Congress (ANC) also suffered a sharp decline from 41.4 percent to 29.9 percent in KwaZulu-Natal. Mosery noted that trends indicate that South Africa is moving toward a political landscape dominated by the ANC and the DA. (Sowetan, December 10, 2009)

Prosecuting Authority Supports Re-Introducing Specialized Units

¶8. (U) The National Prosecuting Authority (NPA) supports the government's decision to re-introduce specialised units, including the Child Protection Unit. The NPA's Sexual Offences and Community

Affairs Unit Head Thoko Majokweni told reporters that the specialized units worked well and that there has been a performance gap since the units were disbanded. The NPA intends intensifying its programs to deal with human trafficking, domestic violence and sexual offences. (Eyewitness News, December 11, 2009).

DA to challenge Simelane's appointment

¶9. (U) DA leader and Western Cape Premier Helen Zille will lodge papers in the North Gauteng High Court in protest against Menzi Simelane's appointment as NPA head. Simelane's appointment in late November was met by a storm of controversy. The DA believes Simelane's appointment as National Director of Public Prosecutions is unlawful and improper. Zille will lead the party's approach to the court to challenge the appointment. A complaint laid with the General Council of the Bar against Simelane is also still pending. Simelane's conduct as Justice Department Director-General was criticized by former speaker of Parliament Frene Ginwala during the inquiry into whether former NPA boss Vusi Pikoli was fit to hold office. (Eyewitness News, December 10, 2009)

ANCYL Leader Says IFP No Longer Political Force; Provokes Buthelezi

¶10. (U) ISOLEZWE in Zulu reported on 7 December that ANC Youth League leader Julius Malema has provoked IFP President Dr. Mangosuthu Buthelezi "again" by saying that he was made by the ANC, but then went astray. Malema said this on December 6 in Qalakahle, Ndwedwe, while handing over a home to the family of Mthokozisi Nkwanyana, who died during the August demonstrations at University of South Africa [UNISA]. He said that the IFP was no longer a political force and should stop provoking people. Malema said that "KwaZulu-Natal would never return into the hands of these people, who did not know politics." He added: "We do not fear the IFP." This is not the first time Malema took a shot at Buthelezi. He had previously said that when canvassing for votes, they would go straight to Buthelezi's home and take all his children and make them a part of the ANC. The IFP in KwaZulu-Natal responded by saying that Malema is a person who voices any thoughts he has. [Mainstream independent daily newspaper focused on the Zulu community of KwaZulu-Natal, privately owned by the Independent Group of newspapers]
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